

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 158653

FOL GENEVA 09399 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO KABUL LONDON TEHRAN
JUNE 21, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 09399

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AF
SUBJECT: ATTEMPT TO LIBERATE AFGHAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

REF: A. STATE 155569; B. KABUL 4950; C. LONDON 9739

1. ACCOMPANIED BY HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS COUNSELOR, I CALLED ON ICRC PRESIDENT ALEXANDRE HAY EVENING OF JUNE 20, TO STRESS POINTS PRESENTED REFS A AND B AND AGAIN URGE SPEEDY ACTION ON PART OF ICRC TO EFFECT EARLY RELEASE OF AFGHAN POLITICAL PRISONERS. ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING WERE BORSINGER AND ICRC OPERATIONS DIRECTOR HOCKE.
2. AS ENVISIONED PARA 2, REF A, BRITISH HERE, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH LONDON, ELECTED NOT TO ACCOMPANY US ON THIS CALL (SEE REF C).
3. IN RESPONSE TO POINTS RAISED AND TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS,
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HAY AND HIS COLLEAGUES STATED THAT BOREL NOW HAS HIS AFGHAN VISA AND WILL PROCEED AS SOON AS AFGHAN CONCURRENCE ON A DATE CAN BE OBTAINED. HOCKE SAID THAT THIS SHOULD BE "WITHIN TWO WEEKS" AND, WHEN ASKED CONCERNING EARLIER PROJECTED DATE OF APPROXIMATELY JUNE 25, WITH NEED FOR URGENCY STRESSED, REPLIED THAT THEY WOULD SEND HIM AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME.

4. AGAIN IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTION, ICRC REPS SAID THAT BOREL WOULD CALL ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER, AND THAT A CABLE REQUESTING THIS APPOINTMENT WOULD BE SENT BY ICRC HEADQUARTERS TO KABUL.

5. COMMENT: I THINK THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE ICRC HAS GOTTEN THE MESSAGE AND FULLY UNDERSTANDS BOTH THE NEED FOR URGENCY AND FOR THE APPROACH TO BE MADE AT A HIGH LEVEL IN THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT. IT SEEMS TO ME, HOWEVER, GIVEN OUR EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THIS MATTER, THAT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO SUGGEST COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM WHERE THESE PEOPLE CAN BE TAKEN FOR PROCESSING AS SOON AS THEIR RELEASE HAS BEEN EFFECTED. THEREFORE, I RECOMMEND THAT APPROPRIATE APPROACHES BE MADE, PERHAPS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES SUCH AS IRAN AND PAKISTAN, TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE INDIVIDUALS RELEASED MIGHT NOT BE RECEIVED. END COMMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL UNQUOTE VANCE

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